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The Starting Line: Our 107th Commencement

UB Law Forum

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Starting Line

It all begins with Commencement

There are no endings — only an endless series of beginnings. That was the message of several speakers at UB Law School's 107th annual Commencement ceremonies, held May 18 in the soaring Center for the Arts building. Families, friends, faculty, representatives of the Bar, and most importantly the graduating students themselves, marked that next beginning with celebration and reflection on three years of grueling study.

UB Law Alumni Association President Garry M. Graber offered his congrat-

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ulations on "another milestone." "You are a reflection of this law school," he said, "and now it is my wish that the Law School will become even more a reflection of you. And the way to do that, of course, is to stay involved with the Law School."

The Hon. Kevin M. Dillon, at the time Erie County district attorney, was selected by the graduating class as the adjunct faculty speaker. He recalled his own graduation 20 years previous — feeling, he said, "darn glad to be done, with the firm resolve that I would never be back. But I'm glad I came back to teach criminal law. From this experience I have learned never to foreclose any opportunity that may present itself."

To the supportive parents of the graduates, Dillon made this salute: "If there were more people doing what you have done, there would be fewer people doing what I do for a living."

And he reminded the new class of attorneys, "You cannot help others if you do not help yourself. Remember to take care of those who have taken care of you."

"I implore you to speak what is right and not what is expedient. You have learned how to analyze and how to think, and I urge you to do both before you speak."

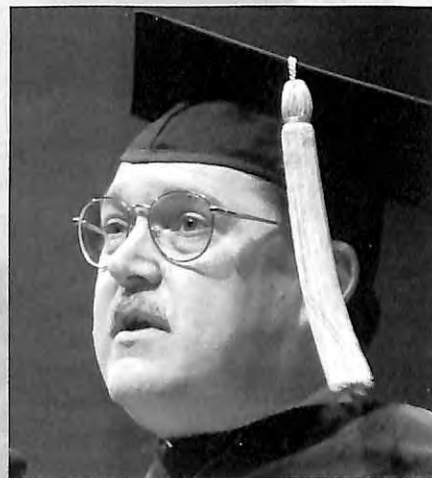


Joseph N. DelVecchio '96 receives warm congratulations.

Sharon V. Lezama-Ramirez '96 with proud family members



Garry M. Graber '78, president of the Law Alumni Association for 1995-96



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*UB's Center
for the Arts*

"Good luck, God bless you, go get 'em!"

The student speaker, Shawn W. Carey, couched his remarks in the form of story that began like this: "Once upon a time there were 235 people from all walks of life who decided to take what amounted to a collective leap of faith: They decided to go to law school."

He remembered the first day of classes for the Class of '96 — Aug. 24, 1993 — and pointed to the support that each student has received from those nearest to him. "Those of us who brought families and children on our journey," he said, "learned that we would succeed not in spite of them, but because of them. Because no one, no one, gets through law school alone."

Carey thanked "our fathers and mothers for a lifetime of caring, ranging from advice to hand-holding to check writing to child care." And he begged one more favor specifically of the spouses of those in the class: "We ask for a lifetime to repay you. It'll take that long — and you've earned every second of it."

In his keynote address, the Hon. Michael A. Telesca, U.S. district judge for Western New York, pointed to the tremendous body of law that has been creat-



*Viktoria Makarevick '96,
left, and Kari K.
Anderson '96*

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ed in the four decades since he walked up on stage to receive his own law degree. "Brown v. Board of Education wasn't decided until our junior year," he said, and went on to list some other hugely important decisions since then: the ERISA assurances of pension security, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act, the Miranda decision.

"But not all legal frontiers have been conquered," Telesca said, citing a prominent redistricting case that threatens to dilute the political power of minority voters.

And he reminded the graduates that to act as an advocate is the highest calling of an attorney. "Change," Telesca said, "doesn't come about simply with rhetoric and poetry. You have to know how to get the job done. ... Law school must be more than a haven for philosophical discourse. It must prepare students for practice outside the classroom. If you get a call from a client who has landed in jail, he wants to know, how soon can you get me out of jail? The 50-year-old man who has lost his job to downsizing wants to know, what can I do? Can I sue the company for firing me in the prime of my working years?"

"The client will always place a premium on a lawyer who can get the job done."

Finally, Telesca said, "the degree you are about to receive today is not a blank check, but a license to serve. Taking cases pro bono is your affirmation that the Constitution works. Don't ever take your eyes off the Bill of Rights."

R. Nils Olsen, vice dean and professor of law, presented a long list of student awards and prizes, and University Provost Thomas E. Headrick and Dean Barry B. Boyer joined in conferring degrees. ■



Jeffrey Brennan '96

Shawn W. Carey '96, the student speaker



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*Barbara S.
Greathead '96*

1996 Commencement Awards

Max Koren Award: Julia Anne Hall

Law Faculty Awards: Julia Anne Hall, Craig Stephen Brown, Jo Anne P. Howlett, Susan Gail Hughes

John N. Bennett Achievement Award: Joseph Nicholas Del Vecchio

Judge William J. Regan Award: Laurie Lynne Menzie

Birzon Prize in Clinical Legal Studies: Jason Hale Sterne

Robert J. Connelly Trial Technique Awards: For Fall 1996: Michele

Prentice-Hall Award: Amy Jean Wendt

Maurice Frey Award: Suzanne Ellen Ouellette

The Ethics Award: Brian Michael Melber

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Dale S. Margulis Award: Craig Stephen Brown

National Association of Women Lawyers Award: Jo Anne P. Howlett

Kenneth A. Gomez Memorial Award: Jo Anne P. Howlett

Adolf Homburger Law Alumni Association Award: Benjamin Douglas Pierson

Judge Matthew J. Jasen Appellate Practice Award: Sean Allen Kennedy

David Kochery Award: Shawn Wilfred Carey

Laidlaw Law Alumni Association Award: David Howard Blackmon.

Moot Evidence Award: Julia Swire Hillel

Christine Crusius, Laurie Ann Giordano, James William Grable Jr., Lyle T. Hajdu; for Spring 1996: Alexander Erik Bernstein, Teresa C. Brophy, Kathleen S. Campbell, Shelley Chao, Susan Marie Etu, Aaron M. Pierce, Benjamin Douglas Pierson, Michelle Murray Radecki, Elena Maria Rita Rosciglione, John L. Sinatra Jr., Holly Ann Penelope Tucker

Carlos C. Alden Award: James William Grable Jr.

Justice Philip Halpern Award: Ann Elizabeth Phillips

Edith and David Goldstein Award: Jeffrey Dean Scherzer.

Lavender Gavel Award: Lisa Regina Strand

Law Faculty Awards: Brian Michael Melber, Charles Francis-Antonio Carbone, Shelley Chao, Sara Jane Hemmeter, Judy Sager Hernandez, Jason A. Yots, Joseph John Hill, Nicole C. Johnson, Kristin B. Jones, Sara Anne Meerse, Robert H. Smith, Daniel Werner

The Minority Bar Association of Western New York Award: Sharon Victoria Lezama-Ramirez

Elected to the Order of Barristers: Karen Anne Marie Bailey, Peter William Beadle, Teresa C. Brophy, Bridget Cawley, William Thomas Gargan, David M. Hastings, Michele J. Owdienko, Jennifer Lynn Lyons, Brian Michael Melber,

UB Law Alumni Association's GOLD Group Award: Benjamin Ryan Dwyer

James D. Tresmond '96



Stephen T. Miller '96 and
Thomas M. Mercure '96



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JoAnne P.
Howlett '96

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